



Family Readiness Program Newsletter

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From the Editor:

Hello Everyone!

Well it seems we survived our first Youth Camp and enjoyed our trip to Boston for the annual NGB Conference. We've had units come home and thanks to a hurricane by the name of Katrina, we've had units go. As those affected know, this call up has gone from State Active Duty to Federal Active Duty. If you have not already received something in the mail from Major Schweickert regarding benefits, pay, etc. you will. And of course, any questions can be directed to the Family Readiness Office. Some interesting websites regarding Katrina and relief efforts:

<http://www.emilitary.org/katrina.html>

http://www.guardfamily.org/act_link.cfm?link=http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/fssa/

Also, Camp Lincoln in Springfield is in the middle of constructing a new Soldier Service Center. Upon completion, it will be a one-stop shop for Soldiers and their Families. Anita Yakle, the FAC in Springfield, has already moved into her new office and will be a central figure in the Soldier Center.

We also have a new "member" of the Family Readiness staff. Kate Lisa was born July 21, 2005 to SFC Kelly Holdman. Kate weighed in at six pounds even and even though she was born bald, she has beautiful blue eyes. Kelly and baby are doing well, in fact so well that Kelly will be back in the office next week. We sure miss you, Kelly!



Janetta Clemons
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Case Lot Sale at Scott Air Force Base!!!! September 23 & 24, 2005

This could even be a fun project for your FRG. You could make a day out of it. Go to the Commissary and to the PX to shop.

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Illinois National Guard Hosts Operation Purple Youth Camp

This summer, the Illinois National Guard Child/Youth program hosted our first Operation Purple youth camp. The camp was held at Marseilles Training Center from 24-29 August, and over 100 youth ages 8-18 attended. Operation Purple is a national program, sponsored by a grant from the Sears American Dream foundation and National Military Families Association.

Our theme was "HOOAH for Kids!" and so we had many activities planned for the youth to experience a mini-boot camp atmosphere. They went through an in-processing when they arrived, and started learning drill and ceremony, marching and cadences right away. The next day started the Physical Fitness training, where they each had the opportunity to show how many push-ups and sit-ups they could do, and complete a half-mile run. During the week, they also got to learn land navigation with a compass and archery. Of course, there were plenty of fun activities as well, including water-balloon fights and a trip to Starved Rock State Park. The culmination of the week on Friday was the Military Games. This was their chance to compete as platoons in a variety of events, including the Crab Walk/Push-up relay, the Golf Ball/Spoon Balance race, and the water bucket relay!

During the camp, they were also able to hear from guest speakers on how to deal with the stresses of deployments. Many of the youth really opened up and shared some of their thoughts, and the last day was a flurry of kids exchanging phone numbers and emails as many wanted to keep in touch with their new friends! Many were also already looking forward to next year!

Major Joseph Schweickert
State Family Program Office Coordinator
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Chaplain's Comments

Pastor Don Baker relates a story of Rev. Tom Erickson: The public Library has a system called "Dial-A-Tale." Anytime a young child wants to hear a fairy tale, he can call the number and a voice comes on reading a short fairy tale to the listening young ear. However, the number is only one digit different from Rev. Tom Erickson. Because the small fingers often make a mistake, Tom gets frequent calls from a child listening for a fairy tale. After several unsuccessful attempts to explain a wrong number to the small child, Tom felt he had only one alternative. He obtained a copy of Three Little Pigs, and set it by the phone. Now, whenever a child calls, he simply reads them the tale. A beautiful illustration of yielding personal rights, he didn't, as you might have thought, change his telephone number to avoid the "invasion of his privacy."

Since your soldier has gone and now maybe returned you have a new insight about "privacy". If you are a spouse with children and your soldier has left, you now have no private time. As a parent you may have taken up some of the slack in the development of your grand children or you may have taken on the management of financial responsibilities for the soldier. First, I want to say, yielding your personal rights are worth it. You are investing in the lives of someone who is valuable. You are taking a personal interest in the development of those you love. Second, view these events not as a burden and as an inconvenience but as an opportunity to express your love. When we become tired and emotionally distraught we have a tendency to become complainers and negative. Is the situation difficult to be in? YES! You have to choose your mindset. Am I going to look at these events and ask myself "how can I make a difference today" or will I say "there is no use"? You can make a difference in the lives of the people around you. Your family members and your soldier are affected by your answer to the above question.

Finally, don't go it alone. If you can only see your world falling apart let

someone know. Do not go to someone who will complain and see the world falling in the trash. Go to someone who will lift you up, someone who will offer HOPE for tomorrow. Remember, if you call someone and all they try to do is complain to you, hang up and call Family Readiness or myself. We will not be irritated that you called. We will offer you hope but do not expect us to read you the three little pigs.

Chaplain Steven Foster

From the Field:

Decatur Family Assistance Center

Hello from the Decatur Family Assistance Center. I wanted to take a few minutes to let you know what is going on in the FRG's in our area.

634th – As many of you know the 634th has been deployed to LA. This was a fast activation for these soldiers and their families. Please think of them and their families during the deployment. Do you know anyone with the 634th? Offer to help them out...

D CO 106th – Although the unit has returned the FRG is hard at work. They hosted a blood drive with the American Red Cross which is a great way to give back to a community who give so freely to us.

A CO 106th - This FRG is also active since the return. They are working on putting together a do it yourself workshop. With do it yourself stations on how to fix a leaky facet, how to maintain your air conditioner/furnace, and self defense. All keeping with the theme of the FRG and teaching the families how to be more self efficient. Great idea A CO!

2-130 – These FRG's continue to do a great job of supporting the families of the soldiers. The FRG meetings continue to be well attended and very educational for all. Please keep them in your prayers as well. During the last month a Battalion picnic was held in Urbana. This was a great way for them to get to know all of the families from all of the units.

Keep up the great work everyone! You are truly appreciated by all.

Kelly Rund

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Chicago Donnelly Armory

Hello again. As usual, it's been pretty busy in the Chicago area. Lately, we've been busy processing our soldiers to head down South to provide assistance in the aftermath of Katrina. The 33rd ASG just returned from Afghanistan in March. Now, they're gone again. They left from North Riverside for Louisiana on Sept. 8th along with volunteers from other units. More soldiers will be following them soon.

August 28th was the formal "farewell" and Deployment Ceremony for Co. C, 205th Medical Battalion. The families gathered with their soldiers at the North Riverside armory for a meal and LOTS of desserts on August 30th. The next morning the unit left for Ft. McCoy where they will spend some time training before heading over to Iraq. The FRG for C205th was active prior to their deployment. We'd like to thank Wendy Ford for all her hard work as FRG leader in the past. Since her family has moved to Springfield, Wendy has had to turn over the "FRG reins" to SSG (retired) Barbara Richey. We'd like to thank Barbara for volunteering to take over such an important task. FRGs have to "kick it up a notch" when their unit is deployed. Barbara is in the process of doing this. Now is when the FRG needs more help and participation than ever. There are lots of volunteer opportunities available. Please consider being an active part of this group. Their next meeting is currently scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 2, 2pm at the North Riverside armory.

And now for some great news – H Battery 202/ADA has returned to the U.S.!

The unit arrived safely at Volk Field, in Wisconsin, at 5:45pm on Saturday, Sept. 10th. Some families made the trip up there to meet them. One spouse summarized it this way, "It was an experience I will never forget. Seeing that little silver dot grow into the plane that brought my soldier home was something I will hold close to my heart forever." The soldiers will be spending a few days up at Ft. McCoy and then returning to the Crestwood armory and their waiting families.

Until next time....

Kathy Kozak
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Crestwood Family Assistance Center

Hello, to everyone that this newsletter touches. The Crestwood Family Assistance Center is continuing in becoming the best that it can be. In the coming months the FRGs at this location are planning excellent events in support of their deployed Soldiers and their families. October 1 2005 is going to be a very special one. The family members are going to do Christmas Videos to send to their Soldiers, and they will also be wrapping Christmas gifts. November, they will be having a Pampering Spa Party, with representative from groups like Mary Kay, and Tastefully Simple, that will be providing their products in support.

My hat is off to the FRG of A 133rd Signal and their leader Kristin Degruy. Keep up the good work. Welcome back to Hotel Battery 2/202 ADA, who returned home on 14 September 2005. There will be more events for this unit in the months to come. To see the delight in the faces of the families that were present, for me really makes this job worth while. And I say thank you to all, for allowing me to serve you and your families.

Anna
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Machesney Park Family Assistance Center

Hello Everyone and Welcome!!!!

I attended Women in Business August 11, 2005 for the Rockford Chamber of Commerce and listened to Sarah Nava Garvey and she is the VP of State and local Government Relations in Washington D.C., for the Boeing Company. Her speech is on audio at <http://www.rockfordchamber.com/recaps.cfm> Her overall speech was focused on family, career, and the company. She went over the importance of education and kids of today. The stress that women of today are faced with, due to she is still a large part of care giving of the children in the family.

A little bit about Sarah's life was she was born in Texas, and Hispanic and her father only had a 7th grade education.

One piece she went over was the new plane 787, which is to come out in 2008. She said, the plane is lighter and will give the French Air bus a competitor. The plane holds more passengers, larger women restrooms, and a change in the overhead compartments. She stated over the past three years their large focus has been on military planes.

I attended with SGT Andrea Bell the recruiter at Machesney Park, IL and there were many vendors from the Rockford area present. It was a wonderful experience.

I attended an Inter Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC) meeting at the RIA on August 29, 2005 and met people from different military organizations who can are there to help families and soldiers out. VFW national, USO, and a number of organizations were present.. The family programs purpose of attending is to see how we as a team can help others in need out and to provide more resources to our families and soldiers.

333rd MP: Anyone interested in helping with a new FRG please contact the FAC and leave a message.

Co A 1-178 IN: Jill Winling at jwinling@Kraft.com and Lisa Guerrero at jfglag898@sbcglobal.net
244ALT: An upcoming meeting on helping with the FRG September 24, 2005 at 3:00 pm at the Army National Guard Armory. We have two new Co-leaders, Welcome!!! Please contact the FRG if you have questions about the FRG Cindy Castle, Co Leader at ccastle@inwave.com and Kathy Wise, Co Leader at kathywise@insightbb.com

Btry C 2-122 D FA: Kelly Upton, FRG Leader at upton23@verizon.net

1644th Trans: Is getting prepared for their reunion brief September 17th, 2005. Families are encouraged to attend. This is to inform families of the benefits the soldiers can receive upon their return. Karin Murphy ckmurphy934@yahoo.com or Mike Olson Co-leader molson@internetni.com

1-178 IN attached to 131 IN out of FT. Polk, LA: Has returned home. Welcome Home!!!!!!

B-178 Elgin: Will have a VA Fair October 23, 2005 at Elgin 0900-1300. Please contact the FAC if you have questions.

C 1-178 Aurora: The FRG Leader for Aurora and Waukegan. Howard Reddick at pegnhow@theramp.net Soon Howard will have soon have an office at the Aurora Army National Guard Armory in Aurora.

135 CM Co: Anyone interested in helping with a new FRG please contact the Armory and leave a message with the office or the FAC representative.

Until next time...

Sue Warneke

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Marion Family Assistance Center

It has been a busy couple of months at the Southern Family Assistance Center. We have been preparing families of the 1344th for the homecoming of their troops. We have done our Reunion Briefs as well as had speakers come to talk on the subjects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and reintegration into civilian life. Needless to say the families are all very excited as the expected arrival time looms closer and closer.

In the midst of the excitement of reunion came a new mission for the 1344th. Some of the soldiers of that unit who were not deployed to Iraq got to be with the first group of soldiers from Illinois to deploy down south to assist with Hurricane Katrina relief and clean up. The families are hopeful they will all be coming home soon and be together again.

Summer picnics have come and gone and it will soon be time to start doing reunion briefs and preparing the families across the region for the return of their soldiers. All seem to be doing well and pulling together to make their deployments smoother for everyone involved. I would like to say a special "Thanks" to all of the FRG leaders who work so hard for the families' everyday and sometimes into the night. You are all greatly appreciated.

On a final note, this Saturday 3rd Battalion will be doing a memorial for SGT Brian Romines. Of course we want to always remember those we lost and be thankful for all that we have.

Have a great fall!!

Dana

FROM OUR YOUTH DIRECTOR:

After a Disaster: A Guide for Parents and Teachers

Natural disasters such as tornados, or man-made tragedies such as bombings, can leave children feeling frightened, confused, and insecure. Whether a child has personally experienced trauma or has merely seen the event on television or heard it discussed by adults, it is important for parents and teachers to be informed and ready to help if reactions to

stress begin to occur. Children respond to trauma in many different ways. Some may have reactions very soon after the event; others may seem to be doing fine for weeks or months, then begin to show worrisome behavior. Knowing the signs that are common at different ages can help parents and teachers to recognize problems and respond appropriately.

Preschool Age

Children from one to five years in age find it particularly hard to adjust to change and loss. In addition, these youngsters have not yet developed their own coping skills, so they must depend on parents, family members, and teachers to help them through difficult times.

Very young children may regress to an earlier behavioral stage after a traumatic event. For example, preschoolers may resume thumb sucking or bedwetting or may become afraid of strangers, animals, darkness, or "monsters." They may cling to a parent or teacher or become very attached to a place where they feel safe.

Changes in eating and sleeping habits are common, as are unexplainable aches and pains. Other symptoms to watch for are disobedience, hyperactivity, speech difficulties, and aggressive or withdrawn behavior. Preschoolers may tell exaggerated stories about the traumatic event or may speak of it over and over.

Early Childhood

Children aged five to eleven may have some of the same reactions as younger boys and girls. In addition, they may withdraw from play groups and friends, compete more for the attention of parents, fear going to school, allow school performance to drop, become aggressive, or find it hard to concentrate. These children may also return to "more childish" behaviors; for example, they may ask to be fed or dressed.

Adolescence

Children twelve to fourteen are likely to have vague physical complaints when under stress and may abandon chores, school work, and other responsibilities they previously handled. While on the one hand they may compete vigorously for attention from parents and teachers, they may also withdraw, resist authority, become disruptive at home or in the classroom, or even begin to experiment with high-risk behaviors such as drinking or drug abuse. These young people are at a developmental stage in which the opinions of others are very important. They need to be thought of as "normal" by their friends and are less concerned about relating well with adults or participating in recreation or family activities they once enjoyed.

In later adolescence, teens may experience feelings of helplessness and guilt because they are unable to assume full adult responsibilities as the community responds to the disaster. Older teens may also deny the extent of their emotional reactions to the traumatic event.

How to Help

Reassurance is the key to helping children through a traumatic time. Very young children need a lot of cuddling, as well as verbal support. Answer questions about the disaster honestly, but don't dwell on frightening details or allow the subject to dominate family or classroom time indefinitely. Encourage children of all ages to express emotions through conversation, drawing, or painting and to find a way to help others who were affected by the disaster.

Try to maintain a normal household or classroom routine and encourage children to participate in recreational activity. Reduce your expectations temporarily about performance in school or at home, perhaps by substituting less demanding responsibilities for normal chores.

Finally, acknowledge that you, too, may have reactions associated with

the traumatic event, and take steps to promote your own physical and emotional healing.

Due to the constant media coverage of the tragedy of hurricane Katrina, children are showing signs of added stress, we at the Child Youth services are here to help. We have Military Kids clubs in several areas of the State. For more information on their locations and times, please call Anne Kessler, Child Youth Services Coordinator for the II National Guard, at 217-622-0146.

Anne Kessler
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